

The Community College Emergency Stabilization Fund (CCESF) will provide one-time, emergency funding to our community colleges to help them hire staff and expand the services they offer to our students.

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**LARSON INTRODUCES LEGISLATION TO HELP COMMUNITY COLLEGES TRAIN WORKERS, WEATHER DIFFICULT ECONOMIC TIMES**

*Washington, DC* – Congressman John B. Larson (*CT-01*), Chairman of the House Democratic Caucus, introduced legislation today that will help community colleges weather these difficult economic times while providing the training and education our students need to be part of the workforce of the future. Right now, community colleges are facing a perfect storm: increasing enrollments as more Americans turn to them to improve their jobs skills and substantial state budget cuts because of the economic downturn. The Community College Emergency Stabilization Fund (CCESF) will provide one-time, emergency funding to our community colleges to help them hire staff and expand the services they offer to our students.

**“I truly believe that our nation’s community colleges can be the birthplace of our economic recovery,”** said Congressman Larson. **“They offer great opportunities for students in all phases of life to get the training and education they need to excel. That is why it is more important now than ever that we provide community colleges with the support they need to continue to fulfill their mission during these difficult economic times.”**

According to the American Association of Community Colleges, enrollment for 2009 is already

10% above 2008 levels. At the same time, 32 states have had to cut the budgets of their public colleges. In Connecticut, local community colleges saw their enrollment increase more than 10% over last year's enrollment while they lost nearly 200 employees.

The CCESF will immediately create jobs at community colleges around the country by providing \$700 million in emergency funding for hiring faculty and other staff. In order to target funding to areas hit hardest by the economic downturn, the level of funding to each state will be determined by their increase in unemployment. States would then distribute the funds to their local community colleges based on total enrollment, growth in enrollment and the unemployment levels in the immediate area. To make sure states don't take advantage of these funds to further cut their own funding of community colleges, the legislation will also requires that states maintain the same level of funding they provided in the previous year and report back on the number of additional staff hired or maintained and students served because of the additional funding.

**“The American people have told us that their number one concern right now is the loss of jobs during these trying economic times. The Community College Emergency Stabilization Fund attacks that issue in two ways,”** said Congressman Larson. **“First it will create jobs immediately for teachers, career counselors, and other staff at community colleges that receive the funding. And second, it will help train our workforce to take advantage of the job opportunities in new and emerging fields that come out of our economic recovery.”**

CCESF will also set aside \$50 million for a competitive grant program for career and technical colleges to be run through the office of the Secretary of Education. The legislation is supported by the Association of Community College Trustees and the American Association of Community Colleges.

Congressman Larson has a strong track record of working to support and expand this nation's community colleges. He has previously introduced legislation, which was included in the Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act, that will make community colleges a hub of technology training in their areas. That bill also created a new competitive grant program for community colleges to improve their instruction and student services and provided \$20.4 million to Connecticut's community colleges to help modernize and update their facilities.

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